

Wilbury Planning

Listed Building Consent

Proposed repair and maintenance to the roof structure, and replacement of severely damaged lathe and plaster with breathable boards and lime plaster to 2no. modest sections of ceiling at first floor level to ensure long-term preservation and survivability of Southdown House as a Grade II Listed Building

Southdown House, High Street, Henfield BN5 9DA



Heritage Statement prepared by Wilbury Planning Ltd

Applicant: HGP Developments Ltd

31 March 2026

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement accompanies a Listed Building Consent (LBC) for the following description of development (known as “*the proposed development*” from hereon):

- “*Proposed repair and maintenance to the roof structure, and replacement of severely damaged lathe and plaster with breathable boards and lime plaster to 2no. modest sections of ceiling at first floor level to ensure long-term preservation and survivability of Southdown House as a Grade II Listed Building.*”

1.2 The site is Southdown House, High Street, Henfield BN5 9DA and the LBC is made to Horsham District Council (HDC) on behalf of the applicant, HGP Developments Ltd.

1.3 The LBC is accompanied by the following documents:

Document	Author	Reference
Application Form	Wilbury Planning Ltd	PP-14716165
CIL Form 1	Wilbury Planning Ltd	18/02/2026
Heritage Statement	Wilbury Planning Ltd	31 March 2026
Historic England Listing	Historic England	1027417
Site Location Plan	Planning Portal	n/a
Block Plan	Wilbury Planning Ltd	01
Topographical Survey	SE Surveying Ltd	001
Ground Floor Plan	SE Surveying Ltd	002
First Floor Plan	SE Surveying Ltd	003
Loft Plan	SE Surveying Ltd	004
Roof Plan	SE Surveying Ltd	005
Elevations	SE Surveying Ltd	006
Sections	SE Surveying Ltd	007
Structural Engineer’s Remedial Works Specification to Internal Roof Structure	Mitchinson Macken Ltd	MM/25511

1.4 The submission of this LBC follows correspondence held in January 2026 with the HDC Conservation Officer, Mr S. Rix.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 Southdown House comprises a two-storey building that is designated as a Grade II Listed Building by Historic England.
- 2.2 The building comprises a retail unit at ground floor level with residential use above. Internal access is provided to the roof space from the first-floor level. The roof covering comprises Horsham Stone with lead valleys.
- 2.3 Due to its age, the existing roof structure is in need of repair and maintenance. Several of the roof timbers are rotten and/or damaged, with several of these timbers impacting the structural integrity of the roof itself. Within the south-west corner of the roof there is visible water ingress that has impacted the floor of the loft space, and caused severe damage to a section of the ceiling below at first floor level.
- 2.4 Further water ingress is evident around the chimney stack and which is detrimentally affecting the surrounding timbers and that has also severely damaged a section of the ceiling below at first floor level.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan.

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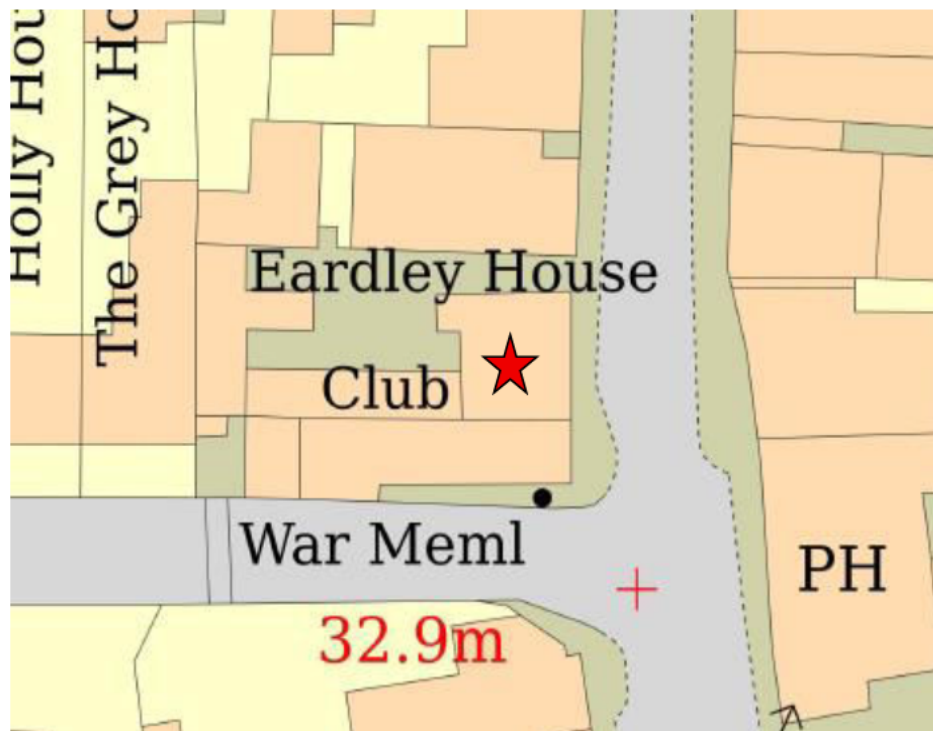


Figure 2: Block Plan (01). Southdown House is denoted by the red star.



Figure 3: Principal elevation of Southdown House, viewed from the High Street.

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Figure 4: Loft Plan.



Figure 5: The existing loft space showing the south facing rafters that require steel plates to be fitted. There is evidence of water ingress in this location.



Figure 5: Visible water ingress within the south-east corner of the loft space.



Figure 6: The damaged timber elbow and damaged valley board.



Figure 7: Visible water ingress to the chimney stack.



Figure 8: Second Floor Plan.

The 2no. sections of ceiling denoted by the red lines. These modest areas require replacement with breathable board and lime plaster due to existing severely damaged lathe and plaster.



Figure 9: The section of ceiling within the eastern part of the building at first floor level that has suffered severe damage due to water ingress and structural issues from the loft space above.



Figure 10: Different view of the section of ceiling within the eastern part of the building at first floor level that has suffered severe damage due to water ingress and structural issues from the loft space above.



Figure 11: The section of ceiling within the south-eastern part of the building at first floor level that has suffered severe damage due to water ingress from within the loft space above.

Historical Context

- 2.5 The Historic England Listing (1027417 refers) associated with Southdown House confirms that the building was erected in the 17th century.
- 2.6 The “*Henfield Historic Character Assessment Report*” prepared by R. B. Harris as part of the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (Harris 2004) places Southdown House within the “*Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 3: High Street West*”. HUCA 3 is described as:
- “*Suburb, with fields to the west of the High Street, first developed in the 17th century and extensively built upon in the 19th and 20th centuries.*”
- 2.7 The HUCA 3 also specifically identifies Southdown House as the only timber framed building within this area, and its significance of the building is partly due to it representing the earliest extant structure on the western side of the High Street.
- 2.8 The Sussex OS Map dated 1874 shows the existence of Southdown House with the adjoining Henfield Club also in situ:



Figure 12: Sussex OS Map dated 1874.

Southdown House is denoted by the red arrow.

- 2.9 By 1896, Henfield had developed further, with additional building having been erected further to the north of the site and on the western side of the High Street:

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Figure 13: Sussex OS Map dated 1896.

Southdown House is denoted by the red arrow.

- 2.10 By the late 1940's, Henfield had developed further, with a strong built form of buildings lining both the western and eastern side of the High Street. Henfield High Street has continued to develop to the present day:



Figure 14: Sussex OS Map dated 1946.

Southdown House is denoted by the red arrow.

2.11 Southdown House is located within the Henfield Conservation Area:



Figure 15: The Henfield Conservation Area boundary is denoted by the red line.
Southdown House is denoted by the red arrow.

2.12 The key characteristics Henfield Conservation Area is summarised in the HDC Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as follows:

- The street plan reflects its evolution from a dispersed Saxon village centred on a minster to a medieval linear settlement strung out along the High Street, with an outlying hamlet at Nep. All of these had coalesced by the 19th century into a single large, loosely planned village with a thriving commercial heart but still with a semi-rural character;

- There is a high concentration of nationally listed buildings in the Conservation Area - 60 in total, with three listed at Grade II* - exemplifying a wide range of building types and architectural styles. Several have good group value;
- There are numerous unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to local character;
- The buildings within the Conservation Area utilise local building materials in a wide range of distinctive vernacular and historic construction techniques;
- There are two large green spaces (the former tanyard and Rothery Field) within the Conservation Area, which are important public amenities and vital elements in the setting of individual buildings or groups of buildings. Vegetation – in the form of mature trees, bushes and shrubs, and verdant borders – is a vital component of much of the Conservation Area.

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3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 A review of HDCs online planning portal reveals no planning history associated with Southdown House itself.

4.0 Description of Development

4.1 This LBC proposes the following repair and maintenance to the roof:

- Provision of new lead flashing to chimney stack;
- Provision of 2no. new purlins with associated steel plates to ensure structural integrity;
- Provision of 2no. new struts; and
- Replace valley board and reattach elbow timber.

4.2 In addition, it is proposed to replace the severely damaged lathe and plaster with breathable boards and lime plaster to 2no. modest sections of ceiling at first floor level.

4.3 The proposed work will ensure the long-term preservation and survivability of Southdown House as a Grade II Listed Building.

4.4 This LBC will not result in any external alterations to the building other than the proposed replacement flashing around the chimney stack.

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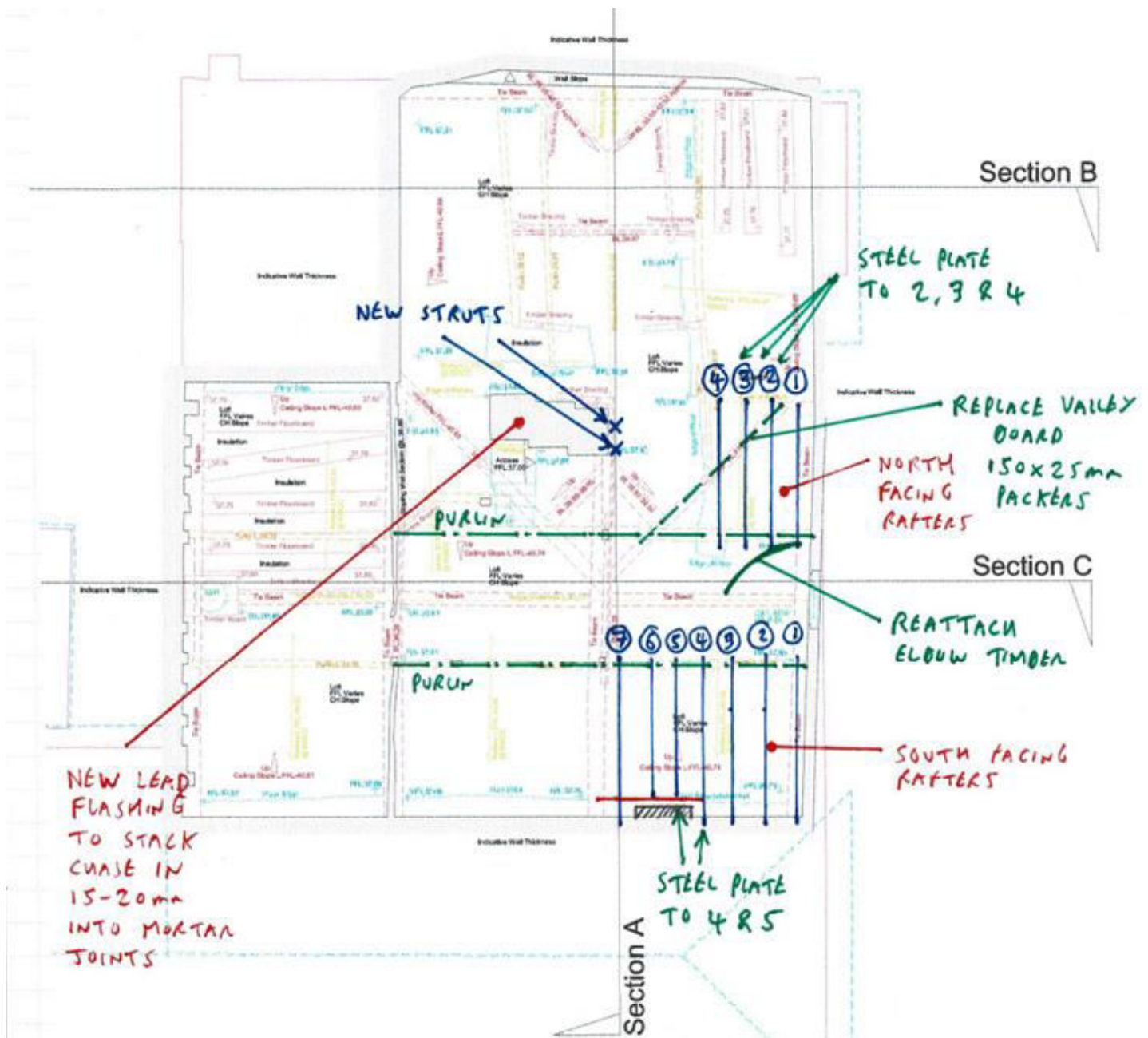


Figure 16: Visual schedule of work to the roof structure within the loft space.



Figure 17: Second Floor Plan.

The 2no. sections of ceiling denoted by the red lines that require replacement with breathable boards and lime plaster due to existing severely damaged lathe and plaster.

5.0 Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, where the Development Plan contained relevant policies, an application for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was initially published in March 2012, and has been revised several times since. The latest iteration is the NPPF (December 2024), and the document sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 5.3 The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration for planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.

Chapter 2 (Achieving sustainable development)

- 5.4 Paragraph 8 confirms that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 5.5 Paragraph 11 confirms that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and decision-taking. This means:
- *“Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
 - *Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *The application of policies in this framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

- *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this framework taken as a whole."*

- 5.6 Prompt approval of those that accord with the Development Plan (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) equates to applying the presumption, without the need for any prior decision as to whether the proposal would be "sustainable development".

Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

- 5.7 Paragraph 207 refers to proposals that affect heritage assets. The paragraph states:

- *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary..."*

- 5.8 Paragraph 207 is reflected within Paragraph 208, which confirms that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

- 5.9 The weight given to the conservation of heritage assets as part of development is dealt with at Paragraph 212. The paragraph states:

- *"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

- 5.10 Paragraph 215 confirms that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (November 2025)

- 5.11 Heritage assets, and managing change within the historic environment of Horsham District are dealt with in Policy 34. The pretext to Policy 34 confirms that the historic environment is one of the district's greatest assets. It is rich and varied through both the urban and rural contexts of the district.

- 5.12 Policy 34 confirms that development affecting heritage assets will be required to (inter alia):

- *“Make reference to the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;*
- *Reflect the current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and Conservation Area Character Statements; and*
- *Secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through continued preservation.”*

Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (NP) 2017-2031 (May 2021)

- 5.13 Policy 12 deals with design standards, and confirms that design of development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Henfield Conservation Area and/or preserve any adjacent Listed Buildings and their setting.

6.0 Heritage Assessment

Policy context

- 6.1 In accordance with Paragraph 207 of the NPPF, this Section of the Heritage Statement describes the significance of the heritage asset affected, including the contribution made to its setting.
- 6.2 At the local planning policy level, Policy 34 of the HDPF ensures that reference must be made to the significance of heritage assets, reflect current best practice, and secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through their continued preservation. Policy 12 of the Henfield NP seeks to preserve Listed Buildings and their setting.
- 6.3 Southdown House comprises a Grade II Listed Building, meaning that in accordance with Historic England, the building has special historic interest that warrants every effort for its preservation in accordance with the Development Plan.

Proposed repair and maintenance to the roof structure of Southdown House

- 6.4 The existing roof structure of Southdown House is in need of repair and maintenance, and this is due to its age and associated water ingress.
- 6.5 Several of the roof timbers are rotten and/or damaged, with several of these timbers impacting the structural integrity of the roof itself. Within the south-west corner of the roof there is visible water ingress that is starting to impact the attic floor. Further water ingress is evident around the chimney stack and which is detrimentally affecting the surrounding timbers.
- 6.6 The “*Structural Engineer’s Remedial Works Specification to Internal Roof Structure*” document (MM/25511), prepared by Mitchinson Macken Ltd, accompanies this LBC.
- 6.7 This document details the structural repairs and maintenance required to the roof structure, and includes the following information to satisfy the HDC Heritage Officer:
- Detailed description of the replacement timbers;
 - Section measurements;
 - Joining techniques; and

- Method statement.

- 6.8 It is considered the proposed structural repairs and maintenance required to the roof structure will provide the necessary conservation and preservation of the building as a whole, and which must be given great weight in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6.9 The need to replace several timbers will result in less than substantial harm, but this is weighed against ensuring the long-term preservation and survivability of the building as a commercial use at ground floor level which will in turn result in future tangible public benefits.
- 6.10 Overall, the proposed repair and maintenance to the roof structure is considered appropriate in this case and is in full compliance with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and local Development Plan.

Proposed replacement of severely damaged lathe and plaster with breathable boards and lime plaster to 2no. modest sections of ceiling at first floor level

- 6.11 The existing water ingress and structural issues within the loft space has over time resulted in severe damage to the lathe and plaster at 2no. modest sections of the ceiling at first floor level.
- 6.12 Photographs and locations of these 2no. areas are provided at Figures 8-11 of this Heritage Statement.
- 6.13 Investigative work has been undertaken which reveals the extensive damage to the lathe and plaster and the resulting loss of existing historic fabric. As such it is considered inappropriate to repair the existing lathe and plaster in situ.
- 6.14 Rather, it is proposed to replace these 2no. modest sections of ceiling with breathable boards and lime plaster. This approach will allow for breathability to the retained timbers within the ceiling thus preventing long-term condensation and rot to existing historic timbers. This approach will also ensure that the character and appearance of the ceiling is retained.
- 6.15 Overall, the proposed replacement of the 2no. modest sections of ceiling with breathable boards and lime plaster is considered appropriate in this case and is in full compliance with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and local Development Plan.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 This LBC consists of the following description of development:

- *“Proposed repair and maintenance to the roof structure, and replacement of severely damaged lathe and plaster with breathable boards and lime plaster to 2no. modest sections of ceiling at first floor level to ensure long-term preservation and survivability of Southdown House as a Grade II Listed Building.”*

7.2 The site is Southdown House, High Street, Henfield BN5 9DA and the LBC is made to Horsham District Council on behalf of the applicant, HGP Developments Ltd.

7.2 This Heritage Statement demonstrates that the scheme would ensure the long-term preservation and survivability of the Grade II Listed Building to the public benefit of the future generations and in accordance with the provision of the NPPF and the local Development Plan.